

THE
AMERICAN
SUNDAY SCHOOL MAGAZINE.

JULY, 1825.

MISCELLANY.

*REV. DR. STAUGHTON'S ADDRESS,

Delivered at the First Anniversary of the American Sunday School Union, on the 24th of May last, on seconding the resolution "that the experience of the past year, as exhibited in the Report, furnishes the most gratifying evidence of the advantages of the National Institution, which, by concentrating the exertions of every district of our country, diffuses most happily the salutary influence of Sunday school instruction."

SIR—With pleasure I second the motion, which the gentleman from New-York has made. Sunday schools, whether we refer to the novelty of the plan, the modesty of their origin, the advantages which they have produced, or the expectations which they warrant our indulging, are among the most generous and eventful projects which Christian benevolence has ever conceived or attempted. I am at a loss to find an object with which to compare the beneficent, the evangelic design. I would say, it is like Samson leaning with gigantic powers against the pillars of the temple of Dagon. The columns already lean by which vice and ignorance and misery have been supported. But the Sabbath-school Institution has never lost a hair. From its very birth, its locks have been "bushy and black as the raven." So far from having been divested of the power of vision, with the assistance of Heaven, it communicates eyesight to millions. Like Samson it is not destined to perish beneath the demolition it occasions, but shall live and flourish from generation to generation. I would compare it to the opening spring, but the objection meets me, that there are other parts of our globe, where, while we are enjoying a vernal influence, the storms of winter are howling. Sabbath instruction as it extends its unobtrusive, steady, rational and resistless course, is about to give to the world, at the same moment, a universal spring. I would liken it to the sun, but no clouds obscure its effulgence, no "dim

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eclipse" steals over its surface; rejoicing in its moral strength, it anticipates no gloomy declination.

Is it not like the voice which Augustine, in his Confessions, insists that he heard, directed not to an individual but to the whole of our species, "take the sacred volume and read it?" Does it not imitate the seraphim, who are ministering, not only to them that are, but to them who shall be heirs of salvation? Does it not resemble the Son of God, who went about doing good, and whose meat and whose drink was to do the will of a heavenly Father? Is it not like the Holy Spirit brooding on the face of the waters, and bringing into existence and beauty a new and magnificent creation?

Sir, children are our fairest hopes. The young Israelites who crossed the waters of Jordan and effected the conquest of the land of promise, were, agreeably to the views of President Edwards, the most holy and amiable generation that Hebrew history presents. The kindness of their youth, the day of their espousals were grateful to Jehovah himself. And have we not reason to expect as Sabbath-schools diffuse their precious influence, that a similar generation is about to appear far more enlightened in its ideas; far more abundant in its number? Many years ago, I had the affliction to lose by death, a most lovely and, then, an only child. Amid other consoling ideas which associated submission with bereavement, I can never forget the pleasure which a passage in the writings of the pious John Newton imparted. "Suffer the little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of God." His express words I cannot communicate, but the fine idea, whether entirely correct or not, I am not disposed to argue, that does honour to the goodness of his heart, and which every parent must welcome, I love to cherish. We name our settlements, in America, from the general character of the individuals which compose them. This is a Swedish settlement, that an Irish, that an English, that a German, though persons of other nations and persons who first breathed the air of Columbia are to be found among them. This heart-touching writer supposes that the number of ransomed infants in heaven, all advancing to a maturity which earth could never have afforded, shall so far exceed the number of ransomed adults as to justify the declaration that "of such is the kingdom of God." And what do not Sunday schools encourage us to expect. I enter on no Tontine calculation. Everywhere youth is the largest part of the community. The report just read announces the conversion of a thousand children, during the past year. Sir, I expect still greater encouragement in the year to come. I anticipate a season, when our churches below shall be so crowded with the young, that the astonished spectator shall exclaim, "of such is the kingdom of God."

But, sir, I had almost forgotten the motion I am seconding. It states and encourages the efforts and success of combined operation. On this point argument is unnecessary; models are multiplied. See a judge of Israel, sending his 300 foxes with firebrands at their tails, among the standing-corn of the Philistines. Their shocks, their olives and their vineyards were destroyed. See the kings of the earth and their rulers taking counsel together

against the Lord and against his Anointed. Their policy was excellent, but their cause was vicious, and they were therefore dashed in pieces. In nature, let the sun and moon communicate resisting attractions and our tides are low ; let those attractions be combined and the whole earth feels the mighty swell. What is the language of the reverend and ecclesiastical assembly, met, at the present season, beneath this roof, but, that *unity is strength*. The apostle teaches the same idea when he recommends to Christians to unite in themselves the whole choir of graces. “ Add to your faith virtue ; to virtue knowledge ; and to knowledge temperance ; and to temperance patience ; and to patience godliness ; and to godliness brotherly kindness ; and to brotherly kindness charity.” And what shall be the result ? “ If these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Would any one attempt to persuade us, that the combination of the efforts of the servants of God for advancing the honours of the Redeemer, must be ineffective ? He might as plausibly insist, that strand uniting with strand and producing rope ; and rope uniting with rope and producing cable, were a process of weakness ; or, that a solitary rod, were stronger than a Roman fasces.

Sir, all heaven is combination, and earth as it proceeds to its resemblance will be more and more and more combined. I see in this American Sunday School Union, at whose Anniversary I value it as no ordinary privilege to have been permitted to attend a *Holy Alliance* that does not degrade but pour honour on the name. An Alliance which all holy beings must delight in : an Alliance, which, like Israel, ascending to the Temple of the Lord, will proceed from strength to strength “ fair as the moon—clear as the sun—terrible as an army with banners.”

REV. MR. BRECKENRIDGE'S ADDRESS,

On offering the resolution, “ That the objects of this Society are alike interesting to the Christian and the patriot, the permanency of our religious and civil institutions being inseparably connected with the character of the rising generation.

In offering this resolution, Mr. Breckenridge observed, that when Lycurgus wished to make a nation of soldiers, he asked of the Lacedæmonians their children, and beginning with the beginning of life, he new-modelled the character of the whole republic, and made it for ages impregnable, by the assault even of confederated Greece. Such, Mr. B. said, had been the policy of the most wise and successful rulers, to take possession of the *rising generation*, to infix in the minds of children impressions intended to develope themselves in *manhood*, and to affect a nation or an age. These impressions waxed stronger and stronger with the opening powers of the mind on which they had been made ; until, at length, what was but an atom of influence in the spirit of a *little child*, became the *ruling passion* of the full grown man—

and what was but yesterday a throng of little triflers, to-day comes up in the breadth of the land, to wield its energies and control its empire.

What was felt to be so important and so effective a process by the rulers of this world, Mr. B. remarked, would hardly be lost sight of by the *Ruler of the Skies*. It was the wisdom and mercy of our holy religion, that its promises, its provisions, and its precepts, were for *us* and “*for our children*.” The church had for ages been unfaithful and blind, as to the immensely important injunction to “train up her children in the way they should go;” hence “when they became old they departed” from their God.

He said, that he considered the system of Sunday schools as peculiarly felicitous in its adaptedness to supply this very lack of service to the rising race of children. By a process at once simple and efficient—cheap, winning, and susceptible of endless enlargement—the Sunday school takes possession of the minds of little children, and seductively leads their young hearts without noise or violence to Jesus Christ.

As the evening was already far advanced, and much that was appropriate and interesting had been said, he was as unwilling as it was unnecessary to detain the audience with protracted speculations on the advantages of the system of which he was the humble advocate. He would, therefore, waive any remarks upon such points, as that the plan of Sunday schools, by bringing the rich to teach the poor, and the learned the ignorant, produced reciprocal affection between the different classes of society to the great benefit of the country—that by a new and yet easy process, it introduced into corrupt families, pious instructions to those children who, if left to the example of their parents alone, would probably have grown up in extreme ignorance and extreme guilt;—thus, as it were, ingrafting them into a new family, and bringing them under the light of truth and the nurturing of Christianity;—that it raised among the poor, the standard of *knowledge* as well as of general morals, by making them acquainted with the Book which most of all strengthened and instructed the mind.—These and some other thoughts, he would not pause to illustrate; but there was one point of view in which he would for a moment present the influence of Sunday schools, as important and necessary beyond calculation, to our country and to Christianity in it.—He alluded to its promise of good to the unhappy slaves among us,—There existed, in the bosom of the land, some 2,000,000 of men, increasing in a ratio far exceeding that of the white population—and of whom we were very much at a loss to make any disposition safe to us and useful to them—and yet continue much longer in their present condition they could not.

Mr. B. remarked, that he conceived the influence of Sunday schools, if fitly applied, better calculated to render the needed service to them and to the nation, than any other ever yet suggested. By its means, doctrinal instruction in the Christian religion might be very sufficiently afforded them. But still more, a literal knowledge of the Bible might be given to them in Sunday schools. He knew that it had once not been uncommon to say, that the *Book of Life* was *dangerous to the poor slaves*, and *dangerous to their masters*.

ter's safety. Truly it is a most profound confession of the desperate nature of that cause, to call the *Bible dangerous* to its well being. The system which subsists by the *expulsion of the Bible*, will and ought to perish. This language will do for *Papists*, but not for the spirit and latitude of our beloved country. We all agree, that sooner or later our slaves must be free. That giving them the *Bible* will produce a convulsion among them by increasing knowledge beyond their condition, he could not admit. The West-Indian planters, who first argued in this way, and resisted the efforts of Missionaries among their slaves, now encourage them, finding that Christianity makes *better servants* when it makes *better men*. He thought that the effect of teaching them to read and love the *Bible*, would be the most benignant and blessed in all respects.

It was found in Rome of old that the *best instructed slaves* brought from other *countries* were the *best servants*, the most humble, patient, affectionate and faithful. If our slaves were all well instructed in the *Bible*, the ties which bind them to God and their masters, would be made more strong, and tender, and holy. Thus they would gradually prepare for freedom, and their masters gradually be prepared to give it to them. The relations of the slave would imperceptibly be lost in the friendship of the man, and in the fellowship of the Christian. Their chains would rather be *melted away* than broken violently from them. They would rise into freedom with the penetrating, but innoxious, still growth of the tender plant—coming through the confining earth to the light and heat of day;—or like pure and beauteous clouds exhaled from putrid swamps, and descending in vernal showers on the earth—in the process, all the evil is *lost*, it *escapes*, and *blessings, only blessings* come forth in their *stead*. Our slaves would thus, he fondly hoped, be preparing for citizenship at home—for colonies in the West, or colonies on the shore of injured Africa.

In fine, the American Sunday School Union is a most efficient and noble institution. By elements so simple, and means apparently so small, it has reached such vast results, that it reminds us of the prophet's vision of a river stealing silently up from the narrow basement of the temple. Already this fountain has burst out into an abundant and fertilizing stream. Day after day it deepens its channel—widens its surface, and swells its tide of good to the land. And it is our prayer, honoured sir, that before your hoary locks have waved their last blessings upon an institution, which under God you have done so much to promote, its benefits may flow as “the river of God” to a dying world.

THE CATECHISM.

[Continued from page 134.]

SECT. VI.—*Of composing any other Catechisms besides that of the Assembly of Divines.*

Objection. But why should you pretend to write one or more catechisms after the admirable form of sound words appointed by those great men in the Assembly of Divines at Westminster?

Answ. 1. The plainest and most obvious reasons for composing shorter and easier catechisms for young children, are, because that of the Assembly of Divines contains one hundred and seven questions and answers, and is therefore much too heavy a task for their memory. Some of these answers also are formed in too long connected sentences for the minds of children to comprehend or to remember. And there is much of the style and language of it too hard for children to understand. These reasons are so evident to all men, that there is no need to enlarge upon them. Experience has taught this inconvenience to every family who hath tried it.

Let me only point at the cause how it came to pass that this catechism is so long and so difficult. It is well known that the Assembly's larger Catechism, was not composed for children, but for men, to give them a large and full view of all the parts of our holy religion. There are therefore many deep and difficult points of doctrine contained in it, and that in those phrases and forms of speech which are chosen with much learned accuracy by divines skilled in theological controversies; and it must be confessed, that in such a complete and accurate scheme many ideas and many phrases will be far above the reach of any young child in the world. Now the shorter catechism is but an abridgment of the larger, and was made partly with the same design and fulness of accuracy; and it must be acknowledged it is a very judicious abridgment. It is said to be collected or drawn up by a committee of divines, and approved by the Assembly at Westminster; and it is expressed in many of the same phrases as the larger. The composition of it doth not seem to condescend quite enough to the weak understandings of children, either in the choice of the plainest sentiments, which are most needful for children, or the most easy and familiar language; a multitude of the same Latinized and theological terms are used in it as in the larger. The chief advantage of it for learners is this, that it is more easy for the memory, because it is shorter than the other.

If this be well considered, the name or character of that venerable Assembly who composed the Larger Catechism for men, and appointed the Shorter as an excellent abridgment of it for the use of the more ignorant, can never suffer any affront by having still an easier form of words drawn up for the instruction of young children in the principles of Christianity, to prepare them for the better understanding and more profitable use of both their catechisms.

Answ. 2. While I make an attempt of this kind, I do no more than twenty others have done before me, who had a most high esteem for the Assembly's Catechism, and a great and just veneration for it. Has not Dr. Owen, Mr. Edward Bowles, Mr. Thomas Gouge, Mr. A. Palmer, Mr. Matthew Henry, Mr. J. Noble, and other worthy men in England; Mr. Cotton in New England, Mr. Willison in Scotland, &c. composed shorter catechisms for the use of children? And has not this been the very reason which has set most or all of them to work, namely, that even the shorter catechism of the Assembly of Divines has been thought by many to be too long for young children to retain in their memory, and that all of them have supposed it too hard for the children to understand?

What means the multitude of explications of this catechism by so many famous divines, almost ever since it has been written? Do they not all declare, that children are not able to understand this catechism without an explainer? And are not all these explications much too long for young children? What means the breaking of the long connected sentences by some of these judicious explainers into short pieces, and expounding them piece by piece? Does it not plainly show that they thought many of the answers to reach in length far beyond the stretch of the thinking powers of a child? Do they not expressly tell the world so in their prefaces?

One of these divines before-mentioned, prefaces his own catechisms with these words:—" When the venerable Assembly composed this form of instruction, it seems that few of themselves thought it designed or fitted for

babes; some answers being so long, and so full of great sense, that though they may recite the words, that can be of little benefit till they also apprehend the meaning; for *teaching* is not thrusting a set of words into the memory, but helping the learner to understand what is said. Hence about that time we had a multitude of lesser catechisms aiming to stoop to the weak; these are now much forgotten. Some later essays I see to the same purpose, and this I hope may be of like use. After this is competently understood, then go on to teach them the Assembly's shorter catechism, so as to fix it in their memories and judgments." My heart agrees with this writer, and I would say no more than what he expresses.

I can sincerely declare, it is far from my design or my wish to exclude this catechism out of religious families; for if that should once be done, I have much reason to fear in our age there would scarce ~~come~~ a better in the room of it. All that I presume to propose to my friends is, that the Assembly's Catechism might be put into the hands of youth when they are grown up to twelve or thirteen years of age, or more, and that there might be some shorter and easier forms of instruction provided for young children to lay the foundation of the knowledge of religion in their tender minds, and to train them up by degrees till they are capable of using the Assembly's Catechism with understanding and judgment. This method would prepare them to read and learn it with far greater profit than ever they would do if they learned it by heart in their infancy, without knowing what it means.

SECT. VII.—*The Inconveniences of teaching Children what they do not understand.*

Here some will be ready to say, "Where is the inconvenience of it, if children learn something which they do not understand in their younger years? When they have learned these hard words and sentences by rote they may come to understand them afterward; and hereby they will have a form of sound words treasured up in their memories, which may be of use to them when they come know their meaning."

Now to answer this objection, I will spend some time in showing the great inconveniences and disadvantages of this way of catechising, or of pretending to teach children religion by catechisms which are far above their understanding.

1st Inconvenience. Then the little creatures will know almost nothing but words. They will be ignorant of the great and necessary things of religion till several years after, when they come to understand what is the sense and signification of so many hard words and phrases. And can your consciences be satisfied to treat your offspring at this rate? shall their whole childhood be spent until they are eleven or twelve years of age, or perhaps longer, without any real or substantial knowledge of divine things, resting and feeding almost only upon sounds? Is this the best and happiest way to instil principles of godliness early into tender minds, namely, to teach them words which they cannot understand, in hope that they will come to understand them hereafter?

Words are but (as it were) the husks or shell of this divine food, whereby the souls of children must be nourished to everlasting life. Though the food is divine, it is possible the husks may be too hard for them to open. It is the best method for the feeding and nourishing the bodies of young children, to bestow upon them nuts and almonds, in hope that they will taste the sweetnes of them when their teeth are strong enough to break the shell? Will they not be far better nourished by children's bread, and by food which they can immediately taste and relish? And do you not think that those children who are taught such plain and easy principles of religion as they can understand, will grow up to sincere practices of piety much sooner than others, who till eleven or twelve years old know little more than hard words? And a few hard words is almost all that they will know, unless you have taught

them these divine things in some plainer words, and by particular explications?

Let us take notice how exceeding solicitous the apostle was that the Corinthian converts, who abounded in the gifts of the Spirit, should understand every thing that was spoken in their assemblies; and with what a sacred severity he satirizes the practice of speaking divine things without teaching the meaning of them. Read his own words, 1 Cor. xiv. from the first verse to the 28th. Hear how he exposes that unreasonable conduct, even of men inspired with gifts: "If the trumpet give an uncertain sound who shall prepare himself to the battle? And so you, except ye utter by the tongue things easy to be understood, ye shall speak into the air. If I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be to him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian to me. I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that I might teach others also, than ten thousand in an unknown tongue."

2d Inconvenience. Such a practice turns the learning of the principles of religion into a painful and tiresome task, instead of a pleasure. What a huge and heavy toil do you impose on those young creatures at four or five years old, when you force them to learn by heart such a number of words and sentences, which they understand not. What a severe drudgery are they laid under to treasure up in their young memories such long complicated propositions, and such a train of connected sounds, of which they have no idea. Put yourselves for an hour or two in the place of your children—impose a task on yourselves to get by heart a few of the deep and complicated propositions and demonstrations in geometry or algebra, or a mathematical science which you understand not; or set yourselves to learn the 10th or the 36th chapters of Genesis, where the generations of Noah and Edom are rehearsed; make the experiment, and learn thereby what tiresome burdens you impose on your children; and judge whether this be the best and the sweetest way to instil religion into them. Is not such a dry and painful task imposed on them much more likely to make them out of love with religion betimes, and settle their childhood in a rooted aversion to that which is so toilsome without any mixture of delight?

3d Inconvenience. Words which are not understood are much more difficult to be remembered. Can you imagine this is the most effectual way to fix divine things in their memory? Would not the principles of religion and catechisms be much easier learned, if children understood the sense and meaning of them as fast as they proceed? Would not the articles of Christian doctrine and duty slide into their minds with more abundant ease and pleasure? Would they not be fixed much deeper in their remembrance, if they took in ideas together with their words? And would they not be sooner brought into practice, and retained even to old age? For by this means the things as well as the words would take some hold of the memory, and gain a firmer root by their union; and the one would help to recall the other to mind upon every occasion. Words and things are most easily learnt together.

Perhaps you intend that your sons and your little daughters should learn arithmetic, as they grow up towards the business of human life. Why do you not teach them this art of numbers the same way as you teach them religion, if you think it is the best for their instruction and profit? Why are they not set to learn by heart in their infancy the definitions and the rules of Addition, Subtraction, Division, and Proportion? You may as well say, They will understand them in time, they will learn the meaning of them when they come to years of discretion.

No, my friends, you are all wiser, and have more reason than to trifle at this rate in other parts of knowledge which you would bestow on your children. You endeavour to make them understand what they learn by heart, whensoever you think them fit to begin that part of learning, and why, therefore, should the noblest knowledge, even that of religion, be taught them in

so irrational a manner? Why must they be forced to get into their memories such a number of religious sentences and phrases, so many years before they can grasp the meaning of them, or so much as guess at the sense?

But you say, "They will come to understand the meaning of them hereafter." To which I reply,

4th Inconvenience. They will not arrive at the meaning of those words the sooner or better for having learnt them by heart without a meaning; but the sound and chime of words that have passed over the ears and the tongue five hundred times, without any signification, will rather go on to pass over still in the same mechanical manner, and will not seem to want a signification afterward. Thus the children of Papists being taught from their infancy to say their Paternoster and Ave-maria by rote, and repeat their prayers in Latin, continue always contented to say their prayers in the same manner, and do not want to know what the words mean.

And when Protestant children have learnt certain hard words and phrases, which were taught them as their religion very early, it has been found too often, by sad experience, that instead of learning the true meaning of these words and sentences at mature years, they content themselves with having once learnt the words by heart, and perhaps entirely forgot them again, for want of knowing what they meant. It is five to one if ever they give themselves the trouble of reading and considering the sense of them, when once all their lessons are learnt, and they have finished these painful tasks of childhood. Whereas if they understood the answers of a catechism when they had first learnt them by heart, they would certainly have acquired some real and useful knowledge of God and Christ, and things of religion, and would much more effectually retain them in memory all their lives.

Or if, by virtue of a faithful memory, persons should retain the words which they have learnt in childhood, they will vainly imagine themselves furnished with a set of principles of religion, though they feel no power of them upon their conscience in the conduct of life; and all this, because these articles do not lie in the heart, or even in the understanding, as a set of principles for practice, but rather in the head or memory, as a set of phrases.

How many persons are there who have been trained up from their infancy by religious parents in the knowledge of that accurate composition the Assembly's Catechism, and could repeat it from end to end when they were very young; but they pronounced it for the most part like so much Greek or Hebrew? Perhaps, if they had been bred up to read and speak Latin from their early years, they might have some confused notion or idea of the meaning of several of the terms derived from the Latin, sooner than some of their school-fellows; but there are few sentences or whole answers that they could pronounce with understanding, or know what they meant; their tongues have repeated them every Lord's day in a mechanical manner, without a meaning; nor had they ever acquired any acquaintance with religion by all this labour of the memory in those earlier years, had it not been for the care which their parents have taken to instruct them by various methods of conversation, and by talking with them in plainer terms and easier forms of words than the questions and answers of that catechism, though it be so comprehensive a body of divinity; and the reason is, because it is fitter for youths, or for men, than for young children.

Perhaps it will be urged then, "Why may not the Assembly's Catechism be still taught children in their younger years, and let their parents expound it to them?"

But I desire it may be considered, 1, That few parents or masters of families have such a happy skill in the definition of words, as readily to explain the sense of all the harder words and phrases in that catechism in very easy terms, and to bring them down to the understanding of children; they that try will find it no easy matter; for if it were so easy for every parent to do it, why have so many divines laboured in expounding it, and published their expositions? 2. In this method the young child will not learn any whole

scheme or system of his religion in several years, if he must not arrive at it till he has got by heart all the answers in the Assembly's Catechism, together with the explication and meaning of all the terms and phrases in it; for the explaining of the answers, to make young children understand them, will sometimes be much larger than the answers themselves. And 3, It is surely much better to teach the child a catechism which is shorter in itself, that he may learn the whole early, and which is composed of such easy and familiar ideas and terms as he can understand, without so much need of explaining.

But I proceed to the next inconvenience of teaching children sentences so far above their understanding.

5th Inconvenience. May we not have just reason to fear, that the holy things of our religion have not only been made the early aversion of children, but have been exposed to disreputation and contempt, by teaching them such a number of strange phrases which they could not understand? How often have I heard children at four or five years old, gabble over long sentences of divinity in such imperfect words and broken sounds, that it hath been sufficiently evident it was like mere gibberish to them? They were told indeed that *this was their religion*; but they must needs acquire a strange notion of religion by this means; they must think religion a very troublesome thing, which cost them so much pains without any pleasure; and they might early begin to judge that religion was a very obscure and mysterious matter, since they could understand so little of it; and perhaps under this prejudice they never took pains to understand it, because from their infancy they were made to learn something as their religion which they could not understand.

Now, though I am firmly persuaded there are great and glorious mysteries in our religion, which could never have been known till they were revealed, and some of them do now far surpass our full comprehension: such as the doctrine of the blessed Trinity, the incarnation of the Son of God, his satisfaction for our sins, and the operations of the Holy Spirit on the minds of men, &c. yet in the main, I am assured that religion is a very intelligible thing; and as it is the most reasonable thing in the world, I am persuaded it ought to be let both into the memories and hearts of children in a reasonable way, that is, by their understanding.

6th Inconvenience. Shall I add, in the last place, if children are trained up to use words without meaning, they will get a habit of dealing in sounds instead of ideas, and of mistaking words for things; than which there is scarce any thing more pernicious to the reason and understanding of man; nor is there any thing that tends more to corrupt and spoil the judgment in its early exercises.

And particularly, such a practice is likely to have a more unhappy influence in matters of religion. When we are once taught to treasure up substantial articles of faith in syllables and phrases which we do not understand, at other times we shall be tempted to take mere phrases and syllables instead of articles of faith; and this is the ready way, in our following years, to lead us to contend even for human phrases with furious zeal, as though they were the very substance of religion, whether there be any meaning that belongs to them or no.

The result of all my discourse and argument tends to this one point, namely, that catechising is the best and happiest method for the instruction of children in the principles of religion, in the knowledge of God and their duty; and whatsoever catechisms are impressed on the memories of children in their most tender years, they should be taught the meaning of them as fast as possible, or as fast as they learn them by heart.

If all these inconveniences of the contrary practice cannot persuade parents and masters to teach children the principles of Christianity in such words as they can understand, I must leave them to be convinced by making the same unsuccessful experiment themselves as thousands have done before them. If they will put a man's coat on a child, the child may be cumbered with his long and loose habiliments, and yet be starved with cold.

But if persons are convinced of the truth of this proposition, that children

should be taught the things of God in a way and manner suited to their capacity and their tender years, I would then humbly propose, whether it would not be best that catechetical forms might be drawn up according to such rules as these which follow.

(*To be continued.*)

For the American Sunday School Magazine.

QUESTIONS FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL CHILDREN.—NO. III.

Are we the children of Adam and Eve?
Where they good and happy when God made them?
Did they always continue good?
And when they listened to Satan, and broke God's commandment, did they make any body wicked but themselves?

Yes: every son and daughter of Adam partakes of his sinful nature.
And was there no way for them to be saved from punishment, and for us to be saved?
Yes: Jesus Christ came in the flesh and died for sinners, that they, by him, might find favour with God.
And was he punished instead of us?
Yes: he made peace between us and God, by the blood of his cross, and showed us the way to heaven; a *new way*.

Now, at this time I want you to remember how we all came to be sinful. It was through Adam's sin; and we are all his children, and like him.

Well, it was to be a long while before Jesus Christ was to come into the world and die for sin, so to keep his people in mind that they were not fit to come before God in their sins, and that without shedding of blood God would not forgive them, he told them when they came before him they must kill an animal, and burn it upon an altar, as a sign that they remembered their sins, and only hoped for pardon through Christ's blood, which was to be shed as the animal's was. This was called a sacrifice or burnt offering, or an offering for sin.

Did the blood of the animal take away their sins?

No: it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

Whose blood was it a sign of?
Can you be saved without the shedding of Christ's blood?
Now people cannot well understand this, until they *feel* it. I wish you would pray to God to make you feel what a wicked heart you have, and that only Christ can make it clean.

Some of you children have not perhaps been as bad *outwardly* as others, but you have all bad hearts born with you, which you got from Adam. Look at your little brothers and sisters, and all very little children; the first words they learn are bad words; as the Bible says, "As soon as they are born, they go astray and speak lies."

I have seen some children laugh at their little brothers and sisters when they said bad words or did bad things, but it was very wrong, such children were laughing at what God hates, and what will ruin many souls.

How did Jesus Christ make peace between us and God?

By offering himself a sacrifice for us. And did he by dying bring us back to the same state Adam was in at first, so that by keeping God's commandments we can go to heaven?

No: for then we should just have fallen again as Adam did.

What is the *new way* he showed us?
Did Jesus come directly into the world to die for sin?

What did God order his people, the Jews, to do, to put them in mind continually of the only way to heaven?

What was the animal's blood a sign of?

How can you be brought to *feel* that you are a sinner, and can be saved only through Christ?

Is one better than another by nature ?
What do we see little children doing
as soon as they can ?

What does the Bible say about it ?
May we laugh at little children when
we see them do sinful things ?

How does God feel towards sin ?
Will you laugh at what God hates ?

But I must tell you more about Adam
and Eve. After they were turned
out of Paradise they had a son
named Cain, and afterwards they
had another named Abel. Abel
when he grew to be a man took
care of sheep, and Cain worked in
the fields ; he was a tiller of the
ground. Now Cain and Abel
both brought *offerings* to the Lord :
you know I told you what offerings
were. Cain brought of the fruits
of the ground ; was that what God
had ordered ? Cain did not feel
himself a sinner, and did not know
any thing about a Saviour. But
Abel chose the best lamb of his
flock for God, showing that he
thought nothing too good for God,
and was willing to do what God
bid him. And God liked Abel's
offering, but he would not have
Cain's, because he did not bring
what God told him to, but an off-
ering of his own choosing. This
made Cain angry, and though God
told him if he did well he would
accept him too ; instead of trying
to do better, he hated his brother,
and one day when they were in
the field together, he rose up
against Abel and killed him.

He thought nobody knew it ; poor
wicked man ! to think that any
thing can be done out of God's
sight ! God *did* see it, and he said,
"Cain, where is Abel thy brother ?"

He said, "I know not, am I my
brother's keeper ?" thinking to de-
ceive the great and high God.

But no one can do that, and none
who *will* be wicked shall escape
punishment. So God sent him
away from all his friends, and made
him wander about, a poor miserable
wretch, for the rest of his life ; but
he took Abel's soul up to heaven.

Had Adam and Eve any children af-
ter God turned them out of Eden ?

What were their names ?
Which was oldest ?
Which was the best ?

When Abel grew to be a man what
did he do ?

And what did Cain do ?
Did Cain and Abel bring an offering
to God ?

Which of them brought the offering
God had commanded ?

What was that ?
What did Cain bring ?
Which offering did God like ?

Why did not he like Cain's ?
Did Cain after this try to do better ?
How did he act when the Lord did
not accept his offering ?

He was angry as you are when you
are found fault with, but remember
God said to him, "If thou dost well
shalt thou not be accepted ? and if
not, sin lieth at the door." And
so his word says to you ; take care
then not to indulge anger. Cain
hated his brother for being better
than he, and you know what he
did to his brother because he hated
him, don't you ?

By this you see how dreadful it is for
brothers and sisters to hate one
another, and to quarrel.

You know what the hymn says,
"The Devil tempts one mother's son
To rage against another ;
So wicked Cain was hurried on,
Till he had *killed* his brother."

Cannot one of you say all that Hymn ?
It begins, "Whatever brawls disturb
the street."

When God asked Cain where his
brother was, what did he say ?
Did Cain escape punishment by this
lie ?

Shall any of those who will go on in
wickedness get clear at last ?

How did God punish Cain ?
He was the first *murderer* : should you
like to be a murderer ?

Don't you know if you get in a pas-
sion and fight, you may kill some-
body before you know what you
are about ?

Boys, and girls too, sometimes, throw
stones, and strike any one they are
angry at ; and if you do this, you
can't answer for what may happen.
Think of Jesus Christ, who said,
"Love your enemies, bless them
that curse you, do good to them that
hate you, and pray for them which
despitefully use you and persecute
you ;" and do as he did when wick-
ed men mocked him, and struck him.

THE EXAMPLE OF ST. PAUL RECOMMENDED TO SUNDAY SCHOOL
TEACHERS.

We have already contemplated the example of Christ as a teacher,* and we now proceed to consider the character and conduct of one of his most eminent disciples, the great apostle of the Gentiles, who himself expressly sanctions our imitation of both these models: "Be ye followers of me even as I also am of Christ." 1 Cor. 2:1. In tracing the history and character of St. Paul as exhibited in his life and writings, we shall endeavour to point out some of his most prominent excellences, and to recommend them to the imitation of Christians in general, and of Sunday school teachers in particular. May the divine Spirit who endued the mind of the apostle Paul with numerous gifts and graces, impart to us of his blessed influences, that we also may be qualified for every duty to which we may be called. Let us consider,

I. ST. PAUL'S ARDOUR AND ZEAL.

The whole history of the apostle Paul shows that he was naturally of an ardent spirit. The first notice that is taken of him in the sacred records, is, in the character of a zealous persecutor. At the martyrdom of Stephen he exhibited the ardour of his youthful zeal, for "the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet whose name was Saul." Acts 7:58. The forgiving and dignified conduct of the dying Stephen, does not appear to have abated the furious ardour of this young zealot, for we find him, in the expressive language of scripture, "yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord." Acts 9:1. Nor does he rest satisfied with these fierce denunciations, but proceeds with his characteristic eagerness to fulfil these threatenings. While in this state of mind, the Saviour stops him in his mad career, prevents the execution of his persecuting determinations, and directs his zeal into a channel worthy of its warmth and energy.

St. Paul still shows his natural ardour now that he devotes his life to the noblest of causes, but how is the scene changed! He who was once the violent persecutor, is now thus described by Christ: "He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel, for I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." Acts 9:15,16. Thus those energies which once spread terror among the disciples of Christ now become the means of advancing his cause; and he who inflicted punishment on others because of their attachment to their Lord, becomes now ready to suffer and to die for the same divine Redeemer. The ardour of this zealous man now receives its proper direction, and we behold him prompt in displaying the wonderful energy of his character. "And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God." Acts 9:20. Nor was this feeling a mere temporary excitement, "but Saul increased the more in strength and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ." Acts 9:22. His ardour was so great that even in the very sphere of his former persecuting exertions, he exhibits the alteration of his character, and associates affectionately with those very persons whom he formerly pursued with threatenings and slaughter: "And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem, and he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus." Acts 9:28,29.

The whole subsequent history of St. Paul is an exhibition of continued Christian ardour and zeal, in a vast variety of circumstances, and sustained unimpaired to the close of his devoted life. To record every instance of this kind would be to follow the apostle through every step of his life; we shall prefer tracing the principles by which his zeal was excited, regulated, and

* See Magazine, Vol. I. page 103, 132, "The example of Christ as a Teacher, recommended to Sunday School Teachers."

supported, availing ourselves of his history to confirm and illustrate our observations.

Let us contemplate, 1st. The source of the apostle's ardour and zeal.

We have already considered St. Paul as constitutionally ardent in his feelings, but his character exhibits to us principles superior to mere human nature, and in fact contrary to its own uninfluenced desires. We must therefore look to a higher, to a divine origin. When he was first arrested in his evil course, his earliest inquiry was "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" **Acts 9:6.** Christ by his grace transformed the persecutor into a friend, and addressed him, "I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness, both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee, delivering thee from the people and the Gentiles, unto whom I now send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." **Acts 26:16 to 18.** The apostle adds, "Whereupon, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision."

St. Paul being thus called by Christ, and converted by his grace, deemed it his honour and happiness to devote himself most zealously to the service of his divine Master, to whom he owed such unspeakable obligations. In accounting for his ardour which was so strong that some had imputed it to madness, he says, "The love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all then were all dead, and that he died for all that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves but unto him which died for them and rose again." **2 Cor. 5:14,15.** At the commencement of most of his epistles, St. Paul refers to the divine call he had received, and throughout the whole of them the indications are numerous, that his zeal was kindled and maintained by a fire from above. Indeed how could he have borne the trials to which he was exposed, or what could have induced such sacrifices as he made, had not his zeal been excited and sustained by the grace of Christ and the influences of the Holy Spirit? Amidst much to distress his mind and try his faith, he yet was enabled to exclaim, "Thanks be unto God which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place; for we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish; to the one we are the savour of death unto death, and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?" **2 Cor. 2:14 to 16.**

As Sunday school teachers it behoves us to inquire whether our zeal be pure and divine in its origin, as was that of the apostle Paul. It is not enough for us to possess natural ardency of feeling, our zeal must come from heaven and lead to heaven. Are we anxious to inquire, and to do the will of our Lord, or is the source and centre of our zeal mere selfishness disguised? Do we duly contemplate the love of Christ as the incentive to our zeal, and do we love the young for his sake, and endeavour to conduct them to his feet? Is our zeal sufficiently ardent to enable us to endure privations and sufferings for the sake of Christ? Are we constantly repairing to Christ as the divine fountain from whence alone we can obtain the living waters we need? Do we habitually seek for the influences of the Holy Spirit to animate and purify our zeal? Do we humble ourselves before God when we discover the mixed nature of our motives, and the sins which cleave to our most zealous efforts? Let it be our constant prayer that the first springs of our thoughts and efforts may be in God, and that our zeal may be inspired and blessed by Him.

Let us consider, 2dly. The objects to which the ardour and zeal of the apostle were directed.

It depends upon the objects to which the zeal is directed, whether it be a blessing or a curse. An instance of ill-directed zeal we behold in Saul the persecutor; an instance of zeal well applied we behold in Paul the apostle.

This discrimination St. Paul himself teaches us to make, when he says, "It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing." Gal. 4:18.

The glory of God and the salvation of men through Christ, were the great objects to which the zeal of the apostle was consecrated. Rejoicing in the hope of preaching the gospel at Rome, he says, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Rom. 1:16. He says to the Corinthians, "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." 1 Cor. 1:23, 24. Again, "I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." 1 Cor. 2:2. And again, "For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, wo is unto me if I preach not the gospel." 1 Cor. 9:16. The apostle knowing the objects to which his zeal was directed, speaks with holy power to the hearts and consciences of those whom he addressed, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ; as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." 2 Cor. 5:20.

The same objects which excited the zeal of the apostle Paul in the extensive sphere of his labours, call for our exertions in that small circle where God has appointed us to labour. We seek to lead young sinners to the Saviour, to extend the kingdom of Christ, and to advance the glory of God. These objects are worthy of our zeal, they accord with the example of Christ and his apostles; and "it is good for us to be zealously affected" in this "good thing," the salvation of young immortals. We feel persuaded that if these great objects are kept steadily in view, Sunday schools will prosper; but they will surely decline, if these their great ends are forgotten, or if they only excite a secondary degree of attention.

Let us, 3dly, consider the principles by which his ardour and zeal were governed.

His zeal was governed by serious reflection and enlightened wisdom. He did not madly give way to the impulses of excited feelings; he seriously pondered the paths he was pursuing, and the result of all his consideration was to stimulate, not to check the ardour of his well-directed zeal. His was truly "zeal according to knowledge," not according to imagination. "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." 2 Tim 1:12. The apostle after reviewing his past history, in which he particularly notices his former conduct, "concerning zeal persecuting the church," adds, "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ," Phil. 3:6,7. and then hesitates not to give the result of his firmest conviction; "Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him." Phil. 3:7,8,9.

The apostle's zeal was also regulated by the purest benevolence.

It was the cause of Christ and the salvation of immortal souls that excited his ardour. Thus while St. Paul waited at Athens, "his spirit was stirred in him when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry." Acts 17:16. How feelingly does he express his ardent desires for the salvation of others! "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved." Rom. 10:1. He seems to identify the cause of the gospel with his own happiness. "Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Phil. 1:20,21. "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy." 1 Thes. 2:19,20.

There were no selfish considerations to stimulate the zeal of the apostle; there was no human applause to animate his benevolence, but he followed

the track of his Saviour, amidst all the sufferings, reproaches, and persecutions which he was compelled to endure.

The apostle's zeal was practical, and he used the best means to insure success.

His zeal was not merely verbal, professional, and impassioned ; he deemed it his duty to carry it into active operation, and by all the means in his power, to labour for the promotion of the cause he loved so much. Though blessed with divine assistance, and favoured with extraordinary communications from above, his ardour never cooled, his exertions were never discontinued. While looking to God for all his success, he exerted himself as diligently as if every thing depended on his own exertions. He laboured, and taught publicly and privately ; travelled extensive regions ; he wrote largely to the Christian churches ; he excited others to active operations ; he selected the most suitable means ; he adopted the most excellent and varied methods of instruction ; and his whole mind, body, and soul, were constantly engaged in promoting the Redeemer's kingdom.

Thus may we as Sunday school teachers always regulate our zeal by the dictates of wisdom and benevolence, while we are practically endeavouring to advance the cause of Christ. Let us avoid that zeal which is rash, selfish, and merely theoretical, and from the Apostle's example, consecrate our most ardent energies, without reserve, to that Saviour who merits infinitely more than we can give, and who requires as the proof of our sincerity, the full extent of our exertions, which are at the utmost but feeble and limited.

(*To be continued.*)

SUNDAY SCHOOL LIBRARIES.

Sabbath school instruction has greatly increased the number of juvenile readers, and excited a thirst for knowledge in the minds of tens of thousands, who, previous to their admission into these schools, had no inclination to improve either the understanding or the heart. This desire for reading will seek for gratification in the perusal of such books as are presented to it ; and hence it is of the utmost importance to establish suitable libraries within the reach of all who have acquired the art of reading, and whose domestic means do not furnish such sources of mental improvement.

In the reports of auxiliary societies, which have recently passed under our notice, the want of Sunday school libraries is often expressed. In some schools they are well supplied, but this number is very small. We are happy to say, that the Managers of the Union are taking the necessary steps to add a large number of books to their catalogue, which will be appropriate for Sunday school libraries.

The following remarks are from the last report of the New-York Sunday School Union :—

With peculiar pleasure the committee have noticed, that in many schools libraries have been established for the use and benefit of the schools. A judicious selection of books put into the hands of children, and carried to their homes, and read in their families, cannot fail to produce the most beneficial results. Similar establishments are therefore earnestly recommended throughout the Union. In several of the churches in this city, the committee are gratified in being able to say that associations have been formed for the pur-

pose of aiding and assisting in this cause, and they hope they will soon be established in every congregation.

We add the following from the report of the Crawford County Union:—

Further to excite and to continue a becoming attention to the exercises of these important institutions, the Managers of the Union, at their annual meeting in January, 1824, determined on the establishment of a library. More than one hundred volumes of good moral, and religious, with some valuable historical and biographical books have already been collected. A right to the use of this library is procured in this way. Every pupil belonging to the Sabbath schools in this Union, having recited, memoriter, 5,000 verses from the Bible, has a right to take one volume; 10,000 verses, two volumes; and 15,000 verses, three volumes at a time from the library, which are to be returned and others taken, at such times as the regulations of the institution prescribe; and this right, duly certified by the patron of the Union, is to continue during life. It is a social library, the shares in which are confined to the pupils of this Union, and are obtained by dint of application to the Holy Scriptures. As was calculated, the zeal which was beginning to flag, has been much increased, and many of both sexes, who had never been attached to any Sabbath school, are now our most diligent learners, and of these there are a considerable number of married women, and some married men. Some, who in the course of three or four years had recited two or three thousand verses, and were about to leave their schools, have resolved to persevere till they obtain, at least, one share in the library. Certificates of twenty-seven shares, on the plan prescribed, have been duly executed, and many others will soon be claimed. The moral and religious benefit to result from our Sabbath school acquirements, from the Bibles and tracts dispersed in our new settlements, and from the use of the library, which will be greatly increased in process of time, no human calculations can determine.

SELECT SCRIPTURE LESSONS.

The adoption of select Scripture lessons in Sabbath schools, in connexion with Teachers' Bible Classes, has been found by experience a highly beneficial plan for making both teachers and scholars better acquainted with the Scriptures. A number of the schools in Philadelphia entered on the study of the Bible with new vigour, when this method was introduced; but we are sorry to have to say, that some of the teachers have too frequently absented themselves from the Bible Classes, some of which, since we have had a few warm evenings, have been thinly attended. There are at least four such classes in this city. They are held in large rooms, sufficient to accommodate many hundreds more than now attend. We have been led to this subject at the present time, by meeting with the following paragraph in the report of the New-York Male Union; and it affords us great pleasure to find such testimony in favour of systematic instruction in Sabbath schools.

The committee have particularly noticed in schools No. 16 and 23, a plan of systematizing the course of instruction from the scriptures, and in a manner which meets the views of the committee, as to the conciseness of lessons for recitation in Sunday schools, which cannot be too highly recommended. They have arranged select portions of Scripture for every Sabbath in the year, comprising from ten to twenty verses each, one of which portions is announced each Sabbath to the whole school, and all are engaged the follow-

ing Sabbath in receiving instruction from the *same lesson*. This has already effected a union of exertion pleasing and efficacious, and excites the liveliest interest with both teachers and taught, and many benefits are likely to flow from the practice of it. Each scholar is supplied with a printed card containing the selection, and the lesson, numbered in order; the scholars are required to read the portion during the week, and after receiving instruction on it, to commit it for recitation. The lessons are chronologically arranged so as to embrace all the leading incidents of the gospel in due order. The lectures are calculated greatly to inform and interest the teacher, and beautifully adapted to facilitate the instruction of his pupils in a knowledge of divine truth.

SABBATH SCHOOL CONCERT.

The Committee of the New-York Male Union, "announce with great satisfaction that a monthly Sabbath School Concert has been established during the past year in this city, and in almost all the schools throughout the United States. Thousands of teachers and their friends mingling their prayers at the same throne for the same blessing, to the same heavenly Father, present a spectacle most gratifying to the heart of every Christian. There seems to be a spirit rising in favour of these institutions, promising greater and still greater benefits. It will doubtless increase and expand until the blessings which have been purchased by the blood of the Son of God, shall be enjoyed by every member of the human family."

VISITING COMMITTEES.

The following account of one branch of the means used by the New-York Male Union to advance the Sunday school cause, is worthy the attentive consideration of the friends of these institutions in other large cities. We speak from experience when we say, that no plan has yet been devised and put into operation, better calculated to keep up the spirit of Sabbath schools, than the one here mentioned. Having described the other parts of their system, the Committee proceed:—

There is also an association called the "Visiting Committee," consisting of about 30 members of different religious denominations, who meet every Saturday evening for consultation and prayer. This association is subdivided into committees of two, all under proper arrangement, who visit the schools every Sabbath. The schools are all numbered and classed according to their location. Three or four schools, according to the contiguity of their location, are assigned to each committee for one month. The next month the first committee takes the second location, they are followed by a new committee, and it is so arranged that each committee alternately visits every school in the course of a year. The duty of this Visiting Committee, is to exhort, animate, and encourage teachers and scholars, and to dispense the rewards by the constitution awarded to meritorious scholars. Each scholar is entitled for punctual attendance during the month to one cent, for good behaviour two cents, for every 30 verses of scripture well committed to memory, one cent, payable in premium Bibles and Testaments. A Testament is valued at 30 cents, and a Bible at 75 cents. Whenever their tickets amount to these sums, they are redeemed, and rewards publicly bestowed: the Bible and Testament have a handsome certificate pasted in the front, containing the

name of the scholar, number of the school, and the means by which the premium was obtained.

Those who are most advanced are also required to produce texts from scripture, to prove certain propositions previously announced. On the first Sabbath in the month the subject is given out—for instance, “that God has given particular encouragement to children to seek his favour.” The scholar who produces, at the end of the month, four or more different texts of scripture, well committed, giving chapter and verse, is rewarded with a tract. The committee authorise teachers *so far* to assist the scholars in finding proofs, as to direct them to certain chapters containing them, leaving them to select the *verses applicable*, but nothing further; though they are at liberty to put in requisition the help and researches of their parents and others at home, as by this means another grand object is attained in persuading many to search the scriptures.

The fourth Sabbath, being the rewarding day, is the last day of the committee's visitation, who are then succeeded by a new committee.

In regard to the Visiting Committee, it is deemed proper in this place to mention a recent fact for their encouragement. At a school lately organized, on the first visit of a new visiter, *three* of the teachers became seriously impressed under an address delivered by him, and have since made profession of their faith in Christ.

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ADDRESS TO THE SCHOLARS OF THE NEW YORK SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION SOCIETY.*

Beloved Youth, know this, that God has given his Holy Scriptures as a rule of life to ignorant and sinful man: by searching of which, we may know who God is, and what he would have us to do, that we may obtain his favour and the salvation of our souls.

To lead you to the sources of heavenly wisdom, and show you the way of truth and eternal life, we ask you the following questions, desiring you to bring texts from God's holy word, to prove the important truths they contain.

Questions for the year—from May, 1825, to April, 1826.

May. How can you prove that God is holy?

June. How can you prove that God will punish *all unrepenting sinners*?

July. How can you prove that God is merciful?

Aug. How can you prove that God has provided salvation for sinful men?

Sept. How can you prove that God has forbidden all sin?

Oct. How can you prove that God has commanded all to pray?

Nov. How can you prove that God has commanded men to keep holy the Sabbath?

Dec. How can you prove that God is faithful to keep his promises?

Jan. How can you prove that God can do all things?

Feb. How can you prove that God has given encouragement to the young to seek his face and favour?

Mar. How can you prove that God can and will raise the dead?

Apr. How can you prove that God can and will judge all men?

Each scholar who recites four texts of Scripture in proof of the truth set forth in the question for the month, shall receive from the society one number of the Sunday Scholar's Magazine.† The scholars, in preparing their proofs, would do well to write down the question, and the texts that answer

* We have been requested to insert this address, and we do it with pleasure. The address is applicable to all Sunday scholars, and all may find the questions useful.

† This promise is made *only* to the Sunday scholars in New York city.

it, thus keeping a record of what they have committed to memory, which may be sometimes read over; a practice that will give them a better knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, and by the blessing of the Divine Saviour, may make them wise unto eternal life.

ASSOCIATION OF MALE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS.

The following questions have been placed on the list for discussion. The *eleventh* question was taken up for consideration at the meeting in June, and after two or three teachers had offered their sentiments on the subject, it was agreed to make it the order for the meeting in July, and the president was requested to appoint a member to open the discussion.

7. By what means can the benefits of Sabbath school instruction be secured to the elder scholars?
8. What is the best method of directing the study of the Bible in Sunday schools?
9. By what means can Sunday schools be made more popular and useful?
10. What rules are necessary to be observed in offering prayer in Sunday schools, with regard to matter and length?
11. Is it proper to admit persons, as teachers, in our Sunday schools, who do not give any evidence of an experimental acquaintance with religion?

This last is surely an important question; and we hope teachers will reflect upon it, and endeavour to attend the meeting. It is important, first, to know whether persons may be employed to teach that religion which they themselves have not experienced; and, secondly, whether persons of the character described in the question, may be employed, rather than that thousands of children and adults shall remain in ignorance because professors of religion do not come forward in sufficient numbers to instruct them. We hope the subject will be well examined, and divine direction prayerfully sought by all who are called upon to decide a question which involves such high responsibilities.

PROFANE JESTING.

Above all the abuses which ever dishonoured the tongues of men, nothing more deserves the whip of an exterminating angel, or the stings of scorpions, than *profane jesting*; which is a bringing the spirit of God to partake of the follies of a man; as if it were not enough for a man to be a fool, but the wisdom of God must be brought into those horrible scenes. He that makes jest of the words of scripture, or of holy things, plays with thunder, and kisses the mouth of a cannon just as it belches fire and death; he stakes heaven at spurn-point, and trips *cross and pile* [tosses *heads or tails*,] whether ever he shall see the face of God or no; nay, (which is the horror of all,) he makes a jest of God himself, and the spirit of the Father and the Son to become ridiculous. Some men use to read scripture on their knees, and many with their heads uncovered, and all good men with fear and trembling, with reverence and grave attention. *Search the scriptures, for therein ye hope to have life eternal: and all scripture is written by inspiration of God, and is fit for instruction, for reproof, for exhortation, for doctrine—not for jesting;* but he that makes that use of it, had better part with his eyes in jest and give his

heart to make a tennis ball; and that I may speak the worst thing in the world of it, it is as like the material part of the sin against the Holy Ghost, as the jeering of a man is to abusing him; and no man can use it but he that wants wit and manners, as well as he wants religion.

JEREMY TAYLOR.

OBITUARY.

WILLIAM MUNFORD, Esq.

It becomes our painful duty, (says the Richmond Family Visiter,) to announce the death of one of our most useful and valued citizens, William Munford, Esq. who departed this life on the 20th of May last, in the fifty-second year of his age. We say *painful*, not because we would lift our feeble hand in opposition to the will of Providence, but because a great chasm has been made in the affections of numerous relatives; and a career of usefulness such as we have seldom witnessed among us, has been suddenly arrested.

The leading trait in Mr. Munford's character, was an active benevolence, which made him feelingly alive to the interests of his friends, his country, and religion. Besides the care of a numerous family, and a laborious office, bestowed upon him by the legislature of the state, he found time to give much attention to those important institutions, the object of which is to extend the Christian religion, with all its blessings, to the whole world. Of the Bible Society of Virginia, he was an active member and a laborious officer, from its very commencement to the close of his life. When the several associations, whose habit it had been to assemble some of the children of the city for the purpose of giving them instruction on the Sabbath day, determined to concentrate their efforts, Mr. Munford was unanimously chosen the President of their Union. He was also the presiding officer of the United Auxiliary Missionary Society. In the concerns and interests of the Society for Meliorating the Condition of the Jews; and also the Society for colonizing the Free People of Colour on the Coast of Africa, he took an active part. He was also chosen a ruling elder in the Presbyterian church on Shockoe Hill. All these duties he continued to perform with great credit to himself and usefulness to the public, until he was arrested by the hand of death.

And now it is a question of great practical importance, how did this single individual contrive to make himself so eminently useful in so great a variety of ways? How could he, amidst the cares of his domestic concerns, and the duties of his office, contribute so essentially to the success of the numerous societies among us? We answer—it was not by his wealth—for of this he had not a greater share than often falls to the lot of many individuals—it was not by the sums of money which he contributed (though in this respect, considering his means, he was certainly liberal)—but it was in consequence of an active benevolence, sanctified by religion, which prompted him first to *feel* for the miseries of suffering humanity, and then to devise and *execute* the means for their relief. His death was peaceful, and we trust, he has gone to receive the rewards of the faithful on high.

GLEANINGS.

PERSEVERANCE OF A SUNDAY SCHOLAR.

It was noted at the teachers' meeting, that a little girl, nine years old, a faithful attendant at Sunday school, was forbidden by her parents to attend

any longer, as they were opposed to the institution. Having no correct views of its character, and besides being in the country, and some distance from the school, and it being the winter season, they thought the object not of sufficient importance for the care and trouble their little girl bestowed on it. She, however, thought otherwise ; and though of an amiable disposition, and an obedient child, she yet persevered in her endeavours to attend the school, till her parents threatened that if she attempted to go again, they would send her from home. The next Sabbath she began, as usual, to prepare for the *Sunday school*, without endeavouring to hide her intentions. The parents were astonished at her perseverance, but more so when the little girl had put on her hat, and taking her little book, thus addressed them :—“ Father and mother, I love you ; I love you *very much*, but I think I love Jesus, our Saviour, *a great deal more* ; and so I am going to *Sunday school*.” Quite confounded at the conduct of this dear child, the parents permitted her to depart, and shortly followed her to the *Sunday school*, and were delighted with all that passed there, and thenceforth permitted her to attend. At no distant period the father and mother became members of the church, and stated that their earliest convictions of the truth were produced by that circumstance, and expressed great pleasure at the early piety of their interesting little girl.

SAILORS' SUNDAY SCHOOL.

Thomas Philips, Esq. one of the secretaries of the British and Foreign Seaman's Friend Society and Bethel Union, in a letter to the editor, gives the following pleasing instance of the benefit of a *Sunday school* :

“ We have lately had a visit from a clergyman on the coast, who within the last year and a half went to reside there. He has warmly taken up the sailor cause, by first establishing a *Sunday school*, and commencing with six sons of seamen—the number very soon increased so much that he took a large room—several pious young men and women offered their services as teachers. The number now under instruction is about nine hundred ; about half of which are the sons and daughters of seamen and fishermen : the room was too small, and now they hold the school in the church. He says, the alteration that has taken place is surprising, and he has succeeded in application to the owners of the vessels belonging to the port, in persuading them to supply bibles for the whole.”

AN EARLY “ESSAY TO DO GOOD.”

It is stated, in the London *Sunday School Teachers' Magazine*, that a teacher inquiring of a little girl the cause of her absence the past Sabbath, she replied that her mother had obliged her to attend the annual feast in the village of W—— : she also told her teacher, that while there she had met with several of her female relations, all of whom took the name of the Lord in vain ; that she had tried to check them, and had given one of them the

tract entitled the "Swearer's Prayer," and that on trying to persuade them to attend church in the evening, they refused, all laughing at her, and calling her "Methodist." "The next morning," said the little girl, "I went round the village to inquire for children who did not attend Sunday school. I found twelve, whose parents all promised to send them next Sabbath. I left a tract too, at every place where I called: at one house I learned that none of the family ever attended a place of worship! At another, the father said he never went to church himself, and he did not want his children to go to a Sabbath school." It seemed that this little Sunday scholar was influenced in these benevolent acts, by hearing an anecdote read from the Sunday Scholar's Magazine, at the close of which the reader had observed, that *none* were *too young to do good*, adding our Lord's admonition, "Go thou and do likewise."

GOOD FRUITS.

The following is an extract of a letter from a Sunday scholar, to his former teacher. Such testimonies in favour of Sunday schools need no comment.

"I am sure you will be glad to hear from me, and, therefore, I make no scruple in troubling you with a line. Ever since I have been here, my time has been fully occupied by a variety of engagements. Teaching, preaching, walking, reading, visiting the sick and dying, have all urged their claims, and each received a measure of attention. It will afford you pleasure to know, that, independent of my Sunday schools, containing one hundred children, I have two regular congregations, one of a Thursday evening, in the outskirts of our town, the other on a Sunday evening, seven miles distant, in general of about seventy attentive hearers. Other friends have attempted, several times, to erect the standard here, but never could succeed; the opposition was so great that they have been driven out amidst showers of stones, &c.; but the set time for favouring them, I trust, is come, and that where 'sin has abounded, grace will much more abound.' The people have now opened their houses for me. Some of them have entered into a subscription for the purpose of having the gospel continued among them in case I should not be able to attend. There is some talk of having a chapel; but that will be but talk yet. A few evenings since I preached at —, four miles distant, when several came *three* miles to hear me. In my day-school I have one hundred and forty boys; and thus, Sir, one of the unworthiest of creatures is permitted and enabled to make known the glory and celebrate the praise of the Most High; and be assured that Christ, and him crucified, is the sum and substance of all my discourse. This is the foundation, and upon this shall that structure be raised, the top stone of which shall be brought forth amidst shoutings of *Grace! Grace!* I often look back with wonder, admiration, and love, on all the way he hath brought me, and surely it hath 'been a right way;' and among the numerous calls for gratitude, I esteem it not the *least*, that I was privileged with being your *Sunday scholar*. It is to this I can trace those first impressions, which, by the blessing of God, have been so useful to me, in leading me to seek the salvation of my own soul, and caring for the souls of others; and, blessed be God, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, I have been enabled to see, in some degree, already, the fruit of my labours. If this, Sir, was the only instance effected by your instrumentality, let it encourage you still to promote, with a fostering care, those valuable institutions which bring 'glory to God in the highest, on earth

peace, good will towards men ; but no, I cannot but believe that the handful of corn that was sown in — Sunday school, shall bring forth fruit that shall shake like Lebanon, and never will you fully know the extent of the harvest, till we meet around the throne of God, and join with the angelic choir above in singing of redeeming grace and dying love." — *Ninth Report New York Sunday School Union Society.*

"THE EVIDENCES OF A CHANGE OF HEART."

Of a little girl about ten years of age, her teacher related the following fact : " In the early part of last spring, during the recess of the school, she came to me, and said, ' I have longed for the time for the Sabbath school to come, for I have felt myself such a great sinner.' This she said with such earnestness, that the tears stole down her cheeks, and she covered her face with her hands, to stifle her sobs. Thinking that perhaps some error she had committed might trouble her, I inquired what particular sin was on her mind. ' O,' said she, ' they are so many, I cannot enumerate them, my whole heart is so sinful ; every feeling so entirely wrong, that I fear I never can be saved : what shall I do ? ' I found from Sabbath to Sabbath she appeared to have the same deep sense of the evil of her heart. I endeavoured to direct her to the Saviour, telling her that he was the friend of every penitent sinner, and especially the friend of children ; that he had invited them to come unto him, that he had given them gracious promises, and often blessed them. To every thing said in Sabbath school of a religious nature, she gives the greatest attention. Her conscience appears remarkably tender, and her whole conduct and conversation evinces a heart renewed in its spirit and temper. Not long since, in conversation with her in school, I requested her to give me the evidences of a change of heart. She quickly replied, ' A deep sense of, and sorrow for sin, I think is one.' I inquired, what else ; she continued, ' Love to God, to his people, to his word, and his ordinances.' And do you, M —, feel this. ' I sometimes hope I do ; ' she answered, ' but I am the most wicked person in the world, but I try to pray.' I am informed, she makes a practice of secret prayer three times a day. She observed at the last Sabbath school, that she was anxious to see her mother, (from whom she has been sometime absent,) that she might ask her forgiveness for past neglect of duty. And yet those who know her, say, that in all her conduct towards her mother, she is uniformly dutiful and kind. Indeed, her present amiable deportment, her tender pious feelings, interest me very much ; is a source of great pleasure, and sometimes I hope of profit. I think she is a lamb of the Saviour's fold."

First Report of the Connecticut Sunday School Union.

THE TWO PIOUS TEACHERS.

The pastor of a congregation in a neighbouring town of New-Jersey, has given the following interesting statement to one of the committee : In his congregation the interests of vital piety had for a long time languished. Of twelve teachers in the Sabbath school attached to his church, two only were professedly pious. These two had long mourned over the condition of their impenitent fellow teachers, and a few weeks ago inquired of their minister what they should do to induce them to become more deeply and piously engaged in the work they had undertaken. They felt that they needed their Christian co-operation, their prayers, their religious example, and their influence. After solemn consideration of the subject, and prayer for direction, it was agreed that one hour every week, at a special time, should be set apart by them to pray for their impenitent fellow teachers. The engagement was religiously observed. Not many weeks elapsed before three of the teachers came trembling to their minister, bowed down with a deep consciousness of their ill desert, asking the way to eternal life. Not many days passed before

they found peace and joy in believing. Shortly after this, five more of the teachers came, and with the deepest solicitude for their eternal welfare, inquired, "What they should do to be saved." They too are now rejoicing in a good hope, through grace, of pardon and everlasting life: and thus ten of the teachers have become hopefully pious. The revival extended to the congregation, and several others have been released from the thraldom of sin, and introduced to the enjoyment of that liberty wherewith Christ "maketh his children free."

INTELLIGENCE.

AFRICA—LIBERIA.

The Rev. Lot Carey, a coloured preacher at the American settlement on the coast of Africa, in a letter to a gentleman in Richmond, Va. gives some pleasing intelligence, which has been published in the Family Visiter.

On the 13th of March the church met, to hear the relation of a poor heathen, who was led to believe that God, for Christ's sake, had pardoned his sins. He came a distance of about eighty miles to be baptized. About three years ago, he spent three or four months at Sierra Leone, to learn English. There it pleased God to direct some words from the mouth of old Hector Peters, to the heart of poor idolatrous John. The relation of his experience is given in his own broken English, and is very simple and interesting. It is as follows :

"When me been Sallon me see all man go to church house, me go too—me very bad man too, suppose a man can cus me, me can cus im too, suppose man can fight me, I can fight im too; well me go to church-house, the man speak and one word catch my heart (and the same time laying his hand on his breast.) I go to my home, my heart be very heavy, and trouble me too, night-time come, me fear me can't go to my bed for sleep, my heart trouble me so, someting tell me go pray to God, me fall down to pray, no me heart too bad—I can't pray—I think so, I go die now, suppose I die, I go to hell, me be very bad man pass all turrer men, God be angry with me soon I die, suppose man cus me this time, me can't cus im no more, all the time my heart trouble me, all day all night—me can't sleep, by and by my heart grow too big and heavy, think to night me die, my heart so big me fall down this time, now me can pray, me say Lord have mercy, then light com in my heart, make me glad, make me light, make me love the Son of God, make me love every body."

"When he left Sierra Leone he took home with him a spelling-book, and continued praying and trying to spell. A man from Siberia ascended the river, his boat was lost, and he was thrown on the shore at Grand Cape Mount, the residence of John, who received and treated him kindly, for which he asked no compensation but a testament, which the man providentially had.

"Since that time, which has been about a year ago, he learnt to read the bible without any teacher except the Spirit of God, and he has learnt to read middling correctly. He has read and meditated on the different subjects of religion, until he found it was his duty to be baptized; and he came down to our place for that purpose, and gave the relation which I have given you above.

"I must now say, what was I, that I could withstand God? But I thought in order for a more public notice of his baptism, it was best to postpone it until the following Lord's day, which was the 20th, and was a day that ever should be remembered on Cape Mesurado. In the morning the native Sun-

day school met, and your valuable presents of clothes, books, &c.* were opened and laid before the children with tears of gratitude to God and thanks to you. Our teachers and assistants set to, and in a few minutes the appearance of our school was changed, having eighteen boys neatly dressed, and wearing every appearance of civilized and improved children. When we turned them out of school and marched them through our streets, and returned them to church, it appeared to me as if the restoration and salvation of this ruined and degraded people had commenced.

"The church made up a contribution, and neatly dressed our heathen brother John, and gave him an excellent suit of clothes, and gave him fourteen bars,† and sent him home on Monday, and he went on his way rejoicing; we also gave him three bibles and two hymn books.

"Dear Brother, tell the Board‡ to be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, for the work is going on here and prospers in his hands; that the Sunday school promises to be a great and everlasting blessing to Africa; and that on the next Lord's day there will be a discourse delivered on the subject of missions, with a view to get on foot, if possible, a regular school for the instruction of native children; and tell them that they have my grateful acknowledgements for the liberal appropriations they have made, which have been duly and well applied by brother Lewis."

EPISCOPAL SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION, PHILADELPHIA.

Some time ago we promised some extracts from the report of this society, but they have been unavoidably delayed. We shall now merely present the numbers, as given in the report. Most of the *schools* are auxiliary to the American Sunday School Union, although the Society at present is not. The schools, in general, are in excellent order, and are conducted with intelligence and zeal.

Female Schools.—St. Peter's, 73.—Christ Church, 71.—St. James', 60.—St. Stephen's, 30.—St. Andrew's, 90.—St. Luke's, 123—Adult school, 80.—St. Paul's, (coloured) 75.—*Male Schools.*—St. James', 30.—St. Peter's, 50.—Christ Church, 40.—Meadville school, 126.

SHIPPENSBURGH, PA.

The following extract from the report of the Female Sunday School, of Shippensburg, Cumberland county, Pa. was unintentionally omitted in the appendix to the report:

"The school has had, during the last year, 142 scholars; 81 females, and 31 males, white; and 27 coloured, 12 females and 15 males; two adults of each sex; under the care of one superintendent, thirteen female, and five male teachers, eleven of whom are members of the church. Our numbers have been slightly affected by the formation of a German Reformed school in this place: yet, on a comparison of this with the last report, it will be seen that they are nearly threefold what they were when that report was made.

"During the last year our school has been favoured regularly with pastoral visits. The pastor of our church opens it every day with reading, singing, and prayer, and very frequently, in a style suited to their capacities, addresses the children on the concerns of their souls.

The attention of the children to instruction, and their good behaviour during religious exercises, are more encouraging than they have been. There is less disorder in the streets, on the Sabbath, than formerly, and a greater

* These presents were made by some individuals of the Baptist and Presbyterian Churches.

† A bar is equal to seventy-five cents.

‡ The Board of the Richmond Baptist African Missionary Society, of which the writer was a distinguished member from the time of its formation until he went to Africa.

disposition on the part of the children to attend public worship. The teachers seem more engaged in their work, and manifest no disposition to abandon it, and persons are always found ready to take the room of any who remove from our place. A Sabbath school prayer meeting was formed about the beginning of the last year, and continued to be well attended till autumn.

It is contemplated to resume it as soon as the evening service shall be exchanged for one in the afternoon. Sabbath schools might be formed in the country: yet except in the immediate neighbourhood of places of worship, they are formed only to languish and die. Religious persons only are qualified to conduct them, and they only will endure the labour of them long."

SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION OF LOUDON COUNTY.

Since the last report, Mary Jane Dowling, only daughter of Mrs. Catharine Dowling, a scholar, and subsequently a teacher in the Methodist Sabbath School in this place, has died. She was eminently qualified for the duties of a teacher by her education, her virtues, her habits, and piety. Very early in life she made a profession of religion, and her conduct since has been consistent with the self-denying doctrines of Christ. For several years past she is not known to have been out of temper, and the distinguishing trait in her character was that true humility which never forgets we are creatures dependent for all we receive. She appeared to have no will of her own; it was merged in that of her mother and friends. During her last sickness which continued (with slight intermissions of ease) for six months, she was not known to murmur, but showed the most delicate and tender regard to the feelings of her friends; bearing pain with a fortitude that is seldom witnessed in maturer years. Her faith in the promises of her Saviour was calm as the bowers of Eden, was bright as the morning without a cloud. A little before her death she called to the bedside her only brother, and presenting him with a Testament, said, "My dear brother, this Testament is all I have to give you; receive it for my sake; it has been my guide and instructor, and given to me the sweetest consolations. I have no doubt on my mind. I die resigned and happy in the promises of my Redeemer." A life so gentle, so dutiful, so useful in its sphere of action, so truly pious, was rewarded at the early age of sixteen, when her Divine Master commissioned angels of mercy to bear her spirit to those pure regions where blest spirits dwell.

In useful knowledge rich; in innocence a child;
Her body, spirit, soul, was beauty, virtue, grace:
The flower of paradise may bloom upon the wild,
But paradise alone is virtue's native place.

At the burial of this interesting young lady, the scholars and teachers attached to the Sabbath schools in town, walked in procession to the Methodist meeting house, where the services, conducted by the Rev. Mr. Birkby, were solemnly impressive. The lid of the coffin was then opened, and the scholars permitted to take a last look of those features which were never turned upon them but with the mildest expression. It is hoped, that many a sweet and interesting child now bursting into bloom, who may hereafter associate with Mary Jane in heaven, will be able to trace their determination to live a life of regular and consistent piety, from the hour and scene we have described.

WILLIAMSBURGH SUNDAY SCHOOL.

It is now eight years since our school was established, and through the blessing of our heavenly Father, who disposed our hearts to form it, it has

flourished beyond our expectations ; and we think it now bids fair to prosper more than it has ever done, as the number of our scholars has increased, during the three last Sabbaths, from forty to fifty. " Ask and you shall receive," says our dear Redeemer ; and it seems as if we no sooner petitioned, than our requests were granted by the Lord ; for it is since the prayer meeting of the teachers that parents have sent their younger children to us, who permitted their elder ones to go by the door of our school for eight years past, and thought it degrading to let them " be beholden to the young ladies." Teachers also appear to be benefited themselves by the " Concert of Prayer ;" they are stimulated to labour more zealously in the nursery of the Lord, and prepare the young plants for the garden of Eden ; and they feel the flame of devotion, gratitude, and charity, to be animated and burn brighter. Therefore, we would unite our voices with those of the teachers of the American Sunday School Union, and call aloud to the teachers of all Sabbath schools, " Oh, brothers and sisters, who have the care of the little lambs in your Master's flock, prostrate yourselves together at the throne of Mercy, and cry mightily in their behalf."

Five or six hopeful children of our school have been called to the world of spirits since its formation. One little boy, about five years old, said to his mother while he was ill, " I do not wish any body to come to see me ;" and she observing he was frequently whispering to himself, drew near him, and, listening attentively, heard him repeat the Lord's prayer.

Another boy, about eight years of age, was obliged to leave us, his parents removing to the country ; his mother says, " He would retire to the garret to pray, after he left you, and would frequently speak of the Sunday school, and wish he could attend it again." He was a sweet, interesting child, who was attentive to his lessons, and came every Sabbath to school.

A lovely little girl died, who was one of our constant scholars, and though only ten years old, she was occasionally made an assistant teacher. She delighted in the school and in all religious meetings ; she was the daughter of one of our first families, whose parents aided the Sabbath school. During the whole time of her illness, her little soul exulted in the hope of heaven, and her infant tongue was almost constantly chanting her Redeemer's praises. Even in the most agonizing pains she would sing hymns, and call to those around her, " Sing on—sing on ;" and in the dead of the night still her sweet voice was heard. And when she was not singing, she would talk of heaven, and of her Saviour, and of God ; and beg her friends, " Do not weep for me, my Saviour will receive me."

Yes—we have great cause to praise the Lord for his goodness to us ; for disposing the hearts of our citizens to give us the means of procuring every thing necessary for our schools ; and for giving the dear children the inclination to attend. Many a little eye sparkles with pleasure when we enter our Sunday school, and many a little hand is extended to welcome us ; and we have been pleased to hear of many of them inquiring eagerly of their friends, " When will it be Sunday—how many days is it before Sunday ?" And we do sincerely say, we experience more heart-felt pleasure in leading these sweet little immortals in the path that our blessed Saviour has marked out for us, than we ever knew in the pleasures and amusements of the world.

LEWISBURG SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION.

The teachers can only say that the employment is a feast to their souls, and find that those who water shall be watered. There is at present a candidate for the ministry in our Presbytery, (Lexington Presbytery, Va.) who dates his conversion to our school : and it is a remarkable fact, that since our school went into operation, (1816,) but one of our scholars has died, a lad of seventeen, who had commenced the languages with a view to the ministry ;

he died in the faith. At the time of his death he was a teacher. We have a scholar now reading Greek, who is looking forward with expectation to enter the vineyard of the Lord. A few years ago one of the teachers was called upon to visit a sick scholar. "Ah!" said she, "I have wickedly persecuted you and the Sunday school; but it was of the *Devil*, for I am now convinced Sunday schools are the work of God; and will you pray for me that this sin may be forgiven?"

NORFOLK SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION.

We congratulate the friends of these schools upon the formation of the American Sunday School Union in May last. The measure is highly calculated to aid this important branch of evangelical effort, by providing suitable books, and diffusing information relative to the progress of the work.

Our Union has in connexion only three schools—the one conducted by the Methodists and Episcopilians, the Presbyterian and Baptist schools. The first Sabbath school formed in this place was by the exertions of a few ladies in the spring of 1816.

This Union does not interfere with the regulations or direction of any school connected with it, but is only intended to concentrate the efforts of the friends of this good work, and provide means to enable them to carry the design into fuller effect. We venture to believe that in a degree, at least, these purposes have been attained by our Union.

The report of the Union School in giving an account of their condition, says: "Two of our teachers have professed religion since they joined the school, and eight of the scholars. We feel assured that the influence of the school has been of incalculable advantage both to the children and their parents. Many have been led to the house of God, who have never been there before. We have seen the good effects of our instructions, particularly in the life and death of one pupil. In her last moments she blessed the Sabbath school as the means of bringing her to a knowledge of salvation, and felt that she could read her title clear to glory."

From the report of the Baptist School, we extract the following:—"There are not wanting instances of those who have attested by an open profession, the spiritual benefits they derived from their connexion with this Sabbath school. Four of the teachers were baptized at one time, and several others engaged in the same work have been added to the church. Of the scholars we can number several as the fruit of Sabbath instructions, who have joined the Christian standard. Only a few weeks have elapsed since the decease of a young woman, who was convinced of the necessity of redeeming mercy while attending this school.—After being received among the followers of Christ she evidenced by her consistent and pious deportment, that she was a subject of evangelical repentance and faith: and in the hour of trial she committed her spirit to Him on whom she had believed, in the joyful expectation of eternal happiness."

The Managers of this Union have observed with great satisfaction the commencement of a Monthly Concert of Prayer for Sabbath Schools on the second Monday evening of each month, and have resolved to use their endeavours to have it regularly attended here. They are deeply conscious that effectual fervent prayer is indispensably necessary to the prosperity of these schools.

WHEELING SABBATH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION.

Five teachers and several scholars have made a profession of religion since their connexion with the school. About 130 scholars usually attend; they

recited during the last six months 50,000 verses of Scripture, hymns, &c. One little girl in particular, ten years of age, in less than a year recited distinctly, and with great precision, the entire Bible, (Old and New Testaments.) Several others have recited the entire New Testament, and are now reciting the Old.

NATCHEZ SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

Seven of the teachers engaged in the school in 1823, (six of whom are still teachers,) have within the last year made a public profession of their faith in Christ, and have attached themselves to the Presbyterian Church. From the increasing interest manifested by all concerned in the school, we have reason to hope, with the blessing of God, that it will be rendered useful in promoting the cause of religion.

MONROE SUNDAY SCHOOLS, in the Chickasaw Nation.

The first school was established in 1823, the second in 1824, and two more are expected to be commenced very soon. With respect to the probable usefulness of Sunday school missionary labour, the writer of the report remarks:—

In the western part of Tennessee, there is a region of country exceedingly destitute of all moral and religious instruction. The land was lately bought of the Chickasaws, and has been settled with astonishing rapidity. The settlers are enterprising persons from various parts of the Union, and a missionary could scarcely fail to find one or more in every neighbourhood, qualified and prepared to engage in this labour of love. Within twenty or thirty miles of this destitute region, we expect soon to establish a new school, and at this station will probably be placed, at least for a time, your first Sunday school missionary. How joyfully he would receive and co-operate with such a brother, as you may send out, you need not be told. Thirty miles east of this, (Monroe,) is a county of the state of Mississippi, also called Monroe, which is as destitute as the region abovementioned—indeed the whole of Mississippi and Alabama are fields ripe for the harvest. The prospect of establishing Sunday schools on liberal and evangelical principles, is much fairer in this country than in the old states, because prejudices and habits are not so inveterate. We may add, that much good might be done amongst us missionaries, by a faithful Sunday school Missionary. He might do much for the salvation of the Chickasaws. A number of adult Sunday schools might be formed, and we trust will, ere long.

In some instances, the Indians have contributed beeves and milch cows, and the nation has lately appropriated \$35,000, 30,000 of which is to be a permanent fund for the support of schools.

All that seems necessary to effect this desirable object, is a little information and excitement. None can so well communicate this as a Sunday school missionary. So great and pressing are the labours, and cares, and concerns of a missionary station, that a member of the family can seldom leave home, and never but on the most urgent business; consequently the waste region around lies neglected.

The change produced on children is altogether inconceivable to those who have not witnessed it. Could you see them in their savage state, and then walk into one of our schools, your surprise and delight would be inexpressible. In a few instances there is a correspondent change on the parents and friends. The change in the conduct of the blacks is so remarkable, that even the enemies acknowledge it.

AUXILIARIES RECOGNISED IN JUNE, 1825.

Protestant Episcopal Sunday School Society, of St. Mark's church, *Lewistown, Mifflin co. Pa.* Rev. Robert Piggot, Prest. D. W. Huling, Esq. Sec.

Sunday School Society of *Tuscumbia, Alabama.* James Elliot, Sec.

Reformed Sunday School of *Germantown, Philadelphia co. Pa.* Rev. J. H. Smaltz, Prest.

Marlboro Sunday School Branch Union, *Frederick co. Va.* John L. Smith, Sec.

Sabbath School Society of *Lorraine co. Ohio.* Hon. Hen. Brown, Prest. Rev. Daniel W. Lathrop, Cor. Sec.

*Romney Sunday School, *Hampshire co. Va.* Rev. Will. Foot, Prest. William Naylor, Esq. Sec.

Indianapolis Sunday School Society, *Indiana co. Pa.* Caleb Scudder, Prest.

Doe Run Union Sabbath School Society, *Mead co. Ky.* Henry R. Tunstall, Prest. John D. Carlisle, Sec.

Huntington Sabbath School Society, *Huntington co. Pa.* Rev. John Peebles, Prest.

Ebensburg Sunday School Society, *Cambridge co. Pa.* Rev. George Roberts, Prest.

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Notices and Acknowledgments.

Removal.—The Depository of the American Sunday School Union, at New York, has been removed from Messrs. Bliss and White's, No. 128 Broadway, to the bookstore of Messrs. **GRAT & BUNCE**, No. 59 *Fulton street*.

Annual Report.—The First Annual Report of the American Sunday School Union, with the Appendix, is in Press, and will be published on the 11th instant.

* * Catalogues of the Union's publications may be had *gratis* on application at the Depository, No. 13 North Fourth street, Philadelphia.

We have received accounts of the observance of the Sabbath school Concert of Prayer in several places the last month: and also our file of foreign publications, but have not room to notice them in the present number.

Since our last publication the Board have appointed *three* Sabbath school missionaries, making the whole number now commissioned for this important work, *fourteen*. We hope the friends of the society will remember that the Board are dependent upon *donations for this specific object* for the support of this department of their operations.